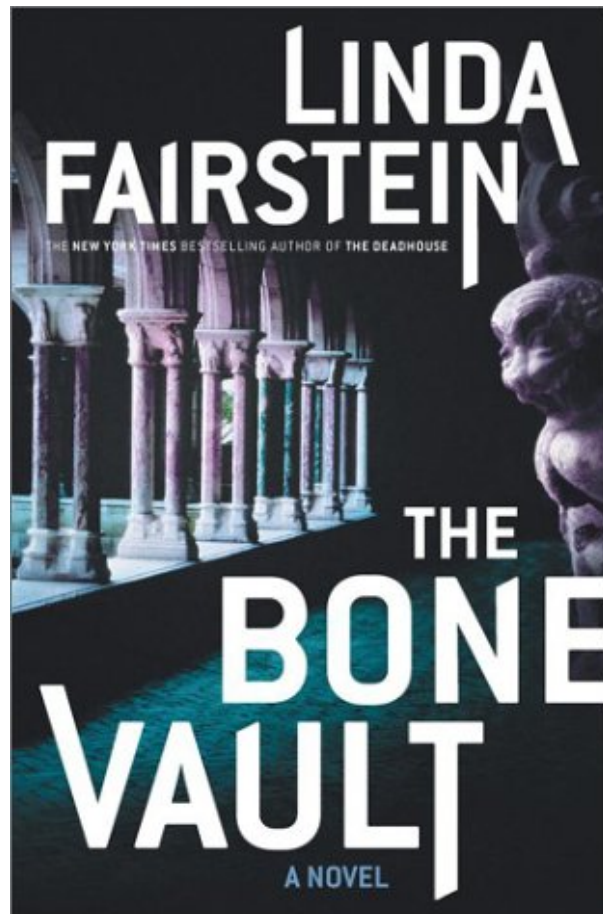
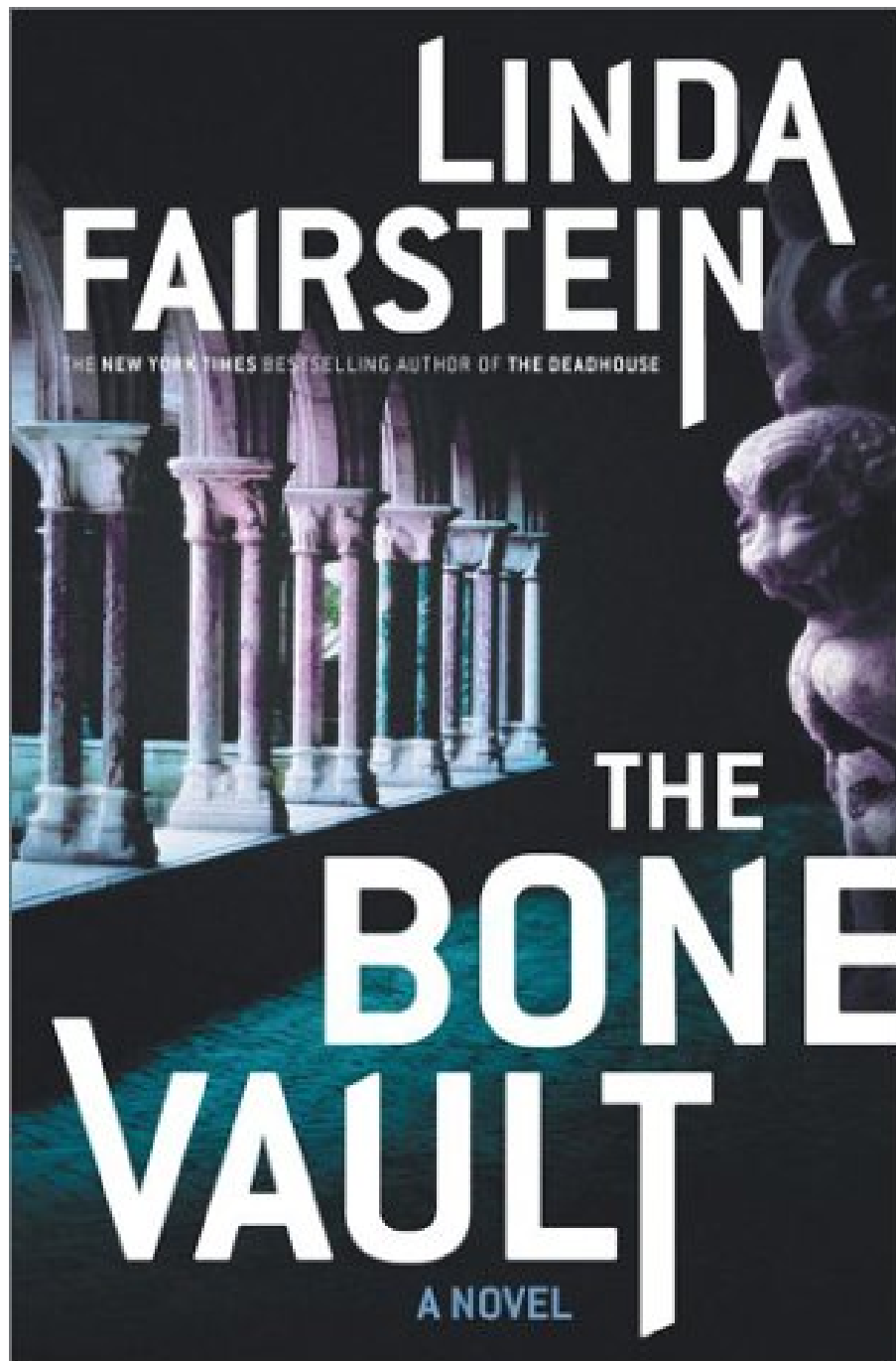


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THE BONE VAULT: A NOVEL BY LINDA FAIRSTEIN PDF

The New York Times bestselling author and renowned former Manhattan prosecutor follows her Nero Award-winning *The Deadhouse* with a mesmerizing new Alexandra Cooper novel set at the crossroads of big money, high culture, and murder... *The Bone Vault* begins in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's glorious Temple of Dendur, where wealthy donors have gathered to celebrate a controversial new exhibit. An uneasy mix of scholarship, showbiz, and aggressive marketing, *A Modern Bestiary* will be a joint venture of the Met and the American Museum of Natural History. With its IMAX time trips and Rembrandt refrigerator magnets, the *Bestiary* has raised fierce opposition from some of New York's museum elite. Assistant DA Alexandra Cooper, off duty for the evening, observes the developing tensions with bemused interest until Met director Pierre Thibodaux pulls her aside. He needs her advice. There's an urgent problem out at a loading dock on a New Jersey pier. A Twelfth Dynasty mummified princess, enclosed for eternity in a huge stone sarcophagus, is about to take a long voyage to Cairo as part of a routine museum exchange. But Cleopatra is missing, and in her place is the not-so-mummified body of a woman many centuries younger than her royal predecessor. Who is this woman with the small physique, the dark hair, and the shiny barrette? What is her connection, if any, to the rarefied world of priceless art and objects? And how and when did she become entombed in the sarcophagus? Teaming with cops Mike Chapman and Mercer Wallace, Alex must explore behind the scenes at the elegant but severe Metropolitan, travel uptown to the remote setting of the Cloisters and its medieval trove of funerary art, and on to the massive array of beasts and bones at the Museum of Natural History. Somewhere deep within the bowels of one of these great cultural centers, a killer may wait. Atmospheric, chilling, and rich with the kind of procedural authenticity that only Linda Fairstein can provide, *The Bone Vault* is a page-turning tour de force from one of crime writing's brightest stars.

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Amazon.com Review

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Most helpful customer reviews

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THE BONE VAULT should be opened by all readers.

By Doris Ann Norris

Spending time with Alex Cooper and Mike Chapman and to learn more about New York City landmarks and institutions is enough of a reason to buy the book. This time it's the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the American Museum of Natural History. When the body of a young intern at the Cloisters is found in a sarcophagus on a ship bound for Egypt, Alex and Mike find the inner workings of the museums, not to mention its many hidden room both fascinating and possibly deadly. An intriguing tale after which one will never look at the institutionalized collection of art and artifacts, including human bones, in quite the same way. It's also a view of why other cultures and countries may not look upon the European/American penchant for "collecting" with quite the reverence that collectors have come to expect. As always Fairstein

intersperses other cases that the Sex Unit of the District Attorney's office is investigating. There is also some interesting, but very subtle movement in the relationship between Alex and Mike. Although books rarely cause me to cry, Alex's recounting of the events of September 11 from her viewpoint as well as from Mike's brought tears to my eyes. It's a beautiful and heartrending account that has nothing to do with the story, but fits in beautifully with the novel. It is also a story that I imagine the author had to tell. "The Bone Vault" is a wonderful book that is available this month. Highly recommended for all who enjoy a great story, fully realized characters and fine writing.

21 of 23 people found the following review helpful.

This is without a doubt Linda Fairstein's best novel yet

By Bookreporter

In 2002, Linda Fairstein retired from her position as head of the Sex Crimes Unit of the Manhattan District Attorney's office. She is the Real Deal --- a real life prosecutor who can write. She's also blonde and gorgeous. Now go ahead and tell me life is fair!

With each of her five novels since FINAL JEOPARDY (her first), she has displayed an increasingly smooth storytelling style uniquely her own. If her books read a lot like true crime, it's because she knows her material down to the most intimate detail. Fairstein's daily work routine has become the stuff of television legend, via Law & Order, particularly Law & Order: SVU, which stands for the department she originated --- not in fiction but in real life. She has made an enormous contribution to the now-safer streets of New York City and, with her retirement, will certainly be missed. We who like to read are lucky because we now have her full-time attention as a writer.

In her fifth outing with her DA protagonist, Alexandra Cooper, Linda Fairstein takes us into a fascinating behind-the-scenes world at the Metropolitan Museum and its offshoot for medieval art history, The Cloisters, as well as the New York Museum of Natural History. They have been planning a 3-way cooperative exhibit on Bestiaries, Real and Imagined (a fictional exhibit that sounds like such a great idea, I wanted to see it for myself). The victim is a young, promising museum employee of The Cloisters who worked on that exhibit. Her perfectly preserved body is found inside an ancient limestone sarcophagus that was about to be shipped abroad, as part of a large shipment of art on exchange from the Metropolitan. Within 24 hours of the body's discovery, the Met's famous Director has resigned. He claims his resignation has no relationship whatever to the finding of the body but, of course, Alex and her team members, Mike Chapman and Mercer Wallace, are not so easily convinced.

An autopsy reveals that the victim died of arsenic poisoning and that she had been dead for almost six months. How did the body come to be in such perfect condition after such a long time? More interesting speculations occur when the head of the museum's Egyptian Collection leaves to attend a "mummy congress" in Chile --- it seems he is the world's foremost expert on mummification. And so onward, the story goes.

Linda Fairstein is deadly serious about her concern over crime (sex crimes in particular) and her novels reflect this concern. But THE BONE VAULT is, nevertheless, fun to read. It is no small achievement to be able to write heavy stuff with a light touch, but she has pulled it off for much of the book. If you enjoy going to museums, this will be a treat for you. Even if museums aren't quite your ideal for crime story enrichment, you'll find a lot of other little tidbits that add to the narrative. These tidbits include insight into Alan Dershowitz's Martha's Vineyard beach habits and in what movie you might catch a glimpse of William Shatner's pubic hair ... if you have sharp eyes and are inclined to look.

THE BONE VAULT is Linda Fairstein's best yet.

--- Reviewed by Ava Dianne Day

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful.

A surprisingly fun suspense novel

By clwinter

I picked this book up looking for a quick read and expecting a sort of Da Vinci Code type suspense thriller. I did find a quick read but the novel was nowhere close to the quality of Da Vinci Code.

Instead, I found a surprisingly fun novel, not just about the Metropolitan Museum but more focused on the Natural History Museum in NYC. While I was expecting another art murder mystery, I found instead learning about the history of the Natural History Museum set amidst a murder at the Met.

Fairstein was a quick read and typical of mass produced mystery novels but this one had an edge that I found alluring. I was able to appreciate the novelist's research on the museums as well as her writing abilities. While they might not be Pulitzer Prize winning it was an enjoyable read.

The novel was a little predictable and the killer pretty obvious but I still found it fun and rather enjoyable. A good beach read.

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